

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Kentucky Basic Education Skills for Teachers Request for Information

Issued by
The
Education Professional Standards Board

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Purpose

The Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to solicit information regarding the development, administration, maintenance, scoring, and score reporting of a Kentucky Basic Education Skills for Teachers assessment (KBEST).

Background

The EPSB in conjunction and full cooperation with its education partners promotes high levels of student achievement by establishing and enforcing rigorous professional standards for preparation, certification, and responsible and ethical behavior of all professional educators in Kentucky. To that end, the EPSB has developed the subsequent goals by which to measure the effectiveness of its preparation programs:

Goal 1: Every approved educator preparation program meets or exceeds all accreditation standards and prepares knowledgeable, capable teachers and administrators who demonstrate effectiveness in helping all students reach educational achievement.

Goal 2: Every professional position in a Kentucky public school is staffed by a properly credentialed educator.

Research is consistently clear that the most important challenge facing P12 education is the preparation and placement of highly effective teachers in every classroom. The EPSB has the statutorily mandated duty to establish minimum standards for admission to Kentucky's teacher preparation programs. The EPSB desires that KBEST be aligned with the Kentucky Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards Universities will use KBEST qualifying scores to identify adequately prepared candidates for admission into both traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs.

The EPSB desires information on the approximate costs and procedures for the development of materials and services for test development, administration, maintenance, scoring, and score reporting. The EPSB will not be awarding a contract as a result of this RFI. This RFI contains preliminary information to serve as a platform for reaction and discussion with the vendor community and to allow EPSB to do budget planning for the future. The requirements in this RFI are in no way final or represent what may be contained in a RFP. This RFI is for information gathering purposes only.

All responses and inquiries concerning this RFI should be directed in writing before January 15, 2011 to:

Robert L. Brown, Director
Division of Professional Learning and Assessment
Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board
100 Airport Rd., 3rd Floor
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
Email: RobertL.Brown@ky.gov

From the issue date of this RFI until the responses are due, vendors shall not individually communicate with any Commonwealth staff concerning this RFI except as referenced above.

RFI responses are due on or before 4:30 p.m. ET, February 15, 2011. Responses should be submitted in hardcopy, with electronic information submitted only in addition to the written RFI Response. Electronic information should be submitted on CD (formatted in Microsoft Word which has been virus-scanned prior to submission). CDs shall be labeled with the respondent's name and the virus-scanning tool and version number used. Email responses will not be accepted. Responses will not be returned.

The outside cover of the package containing the response to this RFI is to be marked:

**Kentucky Basic Education Skills for Teacher
Request for Information
Name of Respondent**

Confidentiality: The state is subject to the Public Records Act, Kentucky Revised Statute 61.872 to 61.884. As such, all information submitted by respondents in response to this RFI is subject to disclosure to the general public. If proprietary information is included in your response it must be clearly marked as "proprietary" and that information will be protected from open records requests.

Responses

Please keep your response to 15 pages or less (not including supporting documentation), and address each section outlined below:

Contact

Please provide the following contact information:

- Company Name
- Address (physical and mailing)
- Name of the individual who will act as the primary point of contact for state inquiries related to this project
- Contact Person's Telephone Number
- Contact Person's Email Address

Qualifications

Briefly describe your company including financial condition, resources, organization chart, experience and length of time in business. Also include your company's products and services, unique qualifications, previous projects of similar size and scope and other information you deem relevant.

Comments

Please provide your evaluative comments on the project description and requirements outlined in this document. What additional information or clarification would you need in order to provide a detailed project solution proposal in the future? Feel free to provide further suggestions or advice regarding the design, implementation, management, technology, etc. of this contemplated project.

Approach

Based on the project information provided by the EPSB to date, briefly describe the approach you would recommend and why. One of the key concerns in the approach should address how data transfer would be implemented. Include benefits that the EPSB should expect to gain by partnering with your company. The approach should include the estimated number of EPSB resources and their roles that are needed to ensure a

successful implementation. Include communication processes that are utilized to keep EPSB informed of implementation status during the proposed solution.

Cost and Schedule Estimates

Based on the project information provided by the state to date, please provide an estimated cost breakdown and schedule/timeframe of the approach recommended above. Discuss any assumptions made to determine the estimated cost, cost tradeoffs and schedule considerations of which you feel we should be aware. In your submitted cost estimates please include initial implementation, ongoing annual maintenance or other recurring costs associated with this type of project. Include a date by which the KBEST assessment would be available.

Note: It is hereby understood that costs submitted by respondents are best estimates only. Said cost estimates are submitted for the sole purpose of helping the EPSB assess the budgetary implications of this project. Respondents will not be held to cost estimates provided in this RFI.

Disclaimer

This RFI is being issued for information gathering and budgetary planning purposes only and does not constitute a contractual solicitation. Responses will not be returned. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with preparing and responding to this RFI. All information provided by respondents shall be at no cost and without obligation to the EPSB.

Background

The EPSB is seeking a vendor who will develop a test of basic knowledge of teacher candidates in areas of math, reading, and writing as well as assume the responsibility for administering, maintaining, scoring, and score reporting.

Key Areas of Commonwealth Interest

The type of assessment described in this RFI is funded through individual dollars to the testing agency.

Current Environment

The Test:

- The vendor shall develop a rigorous assessment under current legal guidelines and professional best practices in collaboration with the EPSB and its education partners which meets the following parameters:
 - addresses the areas of math, reading, and writing
 - aligns to Kentucky Common Core Content College and Career Readiness Standards;
 - meets the needs and goals of EPSB and teacher preparation institutions;
 - is administered in paper/pencil and online formats
 - utilizes the institutions of higher education as testing sites; and, Development of a new test or modifications of an existing test created by the vendor shall include collaboration with individuals from the following agencies and professional populations:
 - EPSB
 - K-12 teachers and administrators
 - Postsecondary faculty from Kentucky Colleges/universities
 - Related subject specific organizations and groups
 - Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)
 - Council on Postsecondary Education

Maintenance:

- The vendor shall periodically update the test (no less than every two years) by aligning with established psychometric standards and in accordance with current state regulations and revised statutes as well as state and national education organizations
- The vendor shall involve individuals from:
 - EPSB
 - K-12 teachers and administrators
 - Postsecondary faculty from Kentucky Colleges/universities
 - Related subject specific organizations and groups
 - Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)
 - Council on Postsecondary Education

Administration:

- The test shall be administered in both an online and paper and pencil format. The paper-and pencil test shall be available at twelve different testing sites throughout the state and administered at least five times per year. The online test shall be administered at no less than five different testing sites throughout the state and available during no less than five testing windows. These sites shall be conducive to concentrated study with minimum to no noise.
- Admissions tickets (notification of testing date, time, and location) shall be sent to participants as group(s) and/or individual(s) via secure automatic e-mail and/or regular mail at least one (1) week prior to the test date. Admissions tickets shall also be available through a personal account via internet.
- Tests shall be graded and individual score reports shall be available to examinees within four to six weeks from the administration date. Score reports shall be available through a personal account via the internet.
- Individual examinee results will be collected and submitted to the EPSB via industry accepted firmware media such as compact disk (CD) or through an encrypted PGP file. Individual examinee results shall include, but not be limited to, the following information for each examinee: name, address, last four digits of social security number, examinee ID#, test date, test code, test name, score, pass/fail indicator, test center, and preparation program.
- Data files will be in a consistent format that makes uploading to the primary operational database as simple as possible. The vendor will collaborate with EPSB staff in the use of acceptable format standards.
- Vendor should anticipate the capability to convert to direct electronic uploading via an industry accepted method such as XML in the near future.
- Customized reports shall be compiled periodically reflecting various time frames.

Customize reports shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- National Summary Report (Results for each examinee disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, education, etc. for any and all examinees who took the test within the United States)
- State Summary Report (Results for each examinee disaggregated by higher education institution by gender, ethnicity, education, etc. for any and all examinees who took the test within Kentucky. This report also reflects candidates who took the test outside of Kentucky but who identified a Kentucky teacher preparation program as their attending institution.)

- Pass Rate Summary per preparation program, which shows the breakdown of performance within each category of the test for each institution disaggregated by gender and ethnicity.

The vendor shall ensure:

- Confidentiality of all data
- Verification of each examinee prior to accessing the test
- Trouble Shooting/Technical & Customer Support to the EPSB and examinees

Overarching Vendor Questions

- What is the anticipated plan of development, such as timeline, agencies, groups, organizations, and individuals included in process?
- What is the anticipated plan of approach for the standard setting study/formulation of minimum competency score?
- What is the anticipated plan of approach for review and maintenance, such as review schedule and agencies, groups, organizations, and individuals included in review process?
- What is the anticipated plan of approach for administration, such as registration process, test dates, examinee fee, test sites, reporting schedule, etc.?
- What will be the method and availability of a Customer/Technical Support System?

Response Format

The purpose of this section is to describe the format the vendors shall use in responding to this RFI. The Sections are:

- **Section 100.00 - Transmittal Letter**

The transmittal letter should be in the form of a standard business letter and should be signed by an individual authorized to represent the vendor. The letter should note if any proprietary information has been included.

- **Section 200.00 – Vendor Identifying Information**

This section will include *at a minimum* the identifying information outlined earlier in this document under the “Contact” section.

- **Section 300.00 – Vendor Response**

The response should address the specific questions and requirements listed above. In addition, please make any comments, observations, or suggestions that may assist the EPSB in its decision to undertake the development of a Request for Proposal, and in the development of contract terms and conditions that may be mutually beneficial.

- **Section 400.00 - Proprietary Information**

The vendor should clearly mark any confidential information that should not be disclosed outside the RFI evaluation team.

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